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## Unity of Effort: A Joint Strategy For Peacebuilding

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Strategic Datalink #89, June 2000

### Introduction

For years, many in the military have regarded peacebuilding as a distraction from the military's 'traditional' roles of waging war and maintaining peace. The belief was that, when deployed on peace support operations, military forces should establish and maintain a safe and secure environment for other actors to carry out their work. Any suggestion that forces should do anything beyond, say, convoy escort or emergency aid distribution, is cause for alarm; a slippery slope to be avoided. According to some analysts, these kinds of operations are seen to "divert the focus of the military from warfighting and decrease unit readiness."<sup>1</sup> While the NATO-led mission in Kosovo serves a challenge to this perspective, old paradigms die hard – especially among high-level policy-makers and military purists. But recent trends in Canadian foreign policy call for innovative ways of fostering 'human security', or the (re-)establishment of the institutions of government to serve the basic needs of the population. Far from calling upon a greater role for the military, these proclamations express a desire to move away from traditional conceptualisations of (national) security, and therefore, by extension, to decrease the salience of the instruments of 'hard power'.

Based on these two seemingly opposing propositions, there appears to be

little hope for cooperation between the Departments of National Defence (DND) and Foreign Affairs (DFAIT) in the field of peacebuilding. However, in the case of Operation *Joint Guardian* in Kosovo, the gulf between theory and practice (and likewise the gulf between the mandates and visions of the two federal departments) is not as pronounced as one would think. Joint action is taking place, on the ground where it matters most, and down to the lowest levels. Far from being diametrically opposed, military forces and civilian peacebuilders are finding out just how complementary their activities are. This paper will explore how this effort has unfolded in Kosovo, and will make recommendations which can be adopted for future missions.

### Peacebuilding for Human Security

We can take as a starting point the fact that Canada is at present committed to an agenda that promotes human security. This entails focusing on a variety of activities designed to prevent conflict (or the re-ignition of conflict) by enhancing the safety of individual human beings. This is achieved through creating social and political space within which people's basic needs are satisfied, allowing them to build bonds rather than compete for the necessities of life – be they food resources or government resources. Put simply, peacebuilding is a process of building social capital within societies. Experience suggests that it is usually conducted after inter-personal or inter-communal

conflict has spilled over into violence, but in theory it can be carried out at any time. It involves a shift of focus from traditional concepts of security of the state to a more personal, human understanding of peace and security. The concept is not unique to Canadian thinking; many countries are turning their attention to policies founded on shared values rather than wholly on (national) interests.<sup>2</sup>

### Peacebuilding in Action

Canadian soldiers deployed to Kosovo in July of 1999 were confronted with the need to perform duties which were a far cry from their traditional roles – namely combat operations and peacekeeping – although the operational environment required that they be configured for traditional tasks. Immediately upon their arrival in the province, they were faced with carrying out the affairs of the non-existent local political authority. Housing disputes between equally disadvantaged families of ten needed to be adjudicated, birth certificates issued, and a whole host of other governmental functions performed. There are two particular points to note about these activities. First, they occurred immediately upon, and concurrent with, the military's arrival in Kosovo. This is significant because it dispels any notion of a linear model of peace support operations. Events do not follow timelines, or fall into distinct 'phases'. Local people approached Canadian soldiers immediately; they did not wait until after some arbitrary entry

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or crisis phase was complete. Second, the military forces had to respond to these kinds of issues as they were equipped and structured at the time; there was no time to re-role forces expressly for this purpose. Because peace enforcement was envisaged as the primary task of ground forces in Kosovo, soldiers in tanks and armoured personnel carriers acted as police, doctors, administrators, and aid workers. The soldiers carried out these non-traditional (human security) tasks with a minimum of preparation and very little directly applicable training. Despite these handicaps, they performed well without reducing their ability to act as providers of physical security. 'Warfighters' could be 'peacebuilders'.

In the weeks that followed, violence broke out between the Kosovo Albanian and Serb communities in places such as Kosovo Mitrovica. The deployment of Canadian soldiers in an interpositional role demonstrated the ease with which peacebuilding soldiers can transition back to one of their more traditional roles. It is this kind of flexibility that needs to be taken into account when thinking about peacebuilding, as "the practical flow of events provides the framework within which policy has to be articulated."<sup>3</sup>

The Kosovo example serves to illustrate that the mandates and policy orientations of DND and DFAIT converged. To illustrate this point further, it is useful to examine the mandate of NATO's Kosovo Force (KFOR):

1. To establish and maintain a secure environment, including public safety and order;
2. To monitor, verify, and where necessary, enforce compliance with the conditions of the [agreements made with the Yugoslav Forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army with regards to their withdrawal and disarmament]; and
3. To provide assistance to the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), including core civil functions until they are transferred to UNMIK.<sup>4</sup>

While parts one and two of this mandate are clearly traditional military tasks, part three entails the delivery of emergency humanitarian aid, as well as development and peacebuilding. The

rather ambiguous phrase, "core civil functions" includes everything from municipal administration to the provision of prison services to the establishment of joint governing councils with international organizations (IOs), non-governmental organization (NGOs) and local figures. Furthermore, while the KFOR mission statement stressed parts one and two, the Canadian contingent's emphasis was on less traditional military roles. Along with providing safety and security, the Canadian mission included the performance of core civil functions (with no end-date mentioned) and the provision of humanitarian assistance. Thus it was in accordance with Commander KFOR's statement that "KFOR and UNMIK are partners in an international effort to restore Kosovo and help the local population to transform the province into a free and democratic society open to all."<sup>5</sup> Kosovo and probably many future missions will have a strong human security (and therefore peacebuilding) component. It is through this lens that national action must be viewed.

### Defining the Military's Role

If human security is the goal and peacebuilding is the strategy used to achieve it, how should the military's role in these types of operations be defined? If one addresses the concept of human security and hard power as a means to achieve it, one can see that they are not necessarily uncomplimentary. In fact, if one views power as a continuum ranging from 'soft' to 'hard', one can see how the application of power can be used to further almost any agenda, including the human security agenda. This opens up the possibility of the military and human security as allies, not opponents. Although the notion of the tools and techniques of war being used to better people's lives may be rejected by advocates of soft power, the concept cannot be dismissed out of hand, since military action has always been an element of, and subordinate to, foreign policy. As an instrument of foreign policy (which itself spells out a variety of political goals) it follows that the military will be called upon to perform a wide variety of duties.

In the case of peacebuilding there are two key attributes of military forces

that must be considered before the extent of their participation in a peacebuilding operation may be determined. The first is competence, the second is capacity.

The Canadian Forces (CF) is made up of talented men and women who, by and large, are well educated and (as demonstrated by events in Kosovo) resourceful. Operational flexibility and personal initiative are hallmarks of military training. Moreover, Canadian personnel are trained to be instructors; to train civilian and military personnel in vital and relevant tasks, such as mine-clearing.

Soldiers are accustomed to making do with whatever resources are on hand, and when on deployment operate (at least initially) under primitive field conditions. Improvisation and professional pride, which is manifested in the drive to 'get the job done', are characteristics of military life. This ensures that military personnel are able to handle the stresses of long absences from home and master new tasks, even non-traditional ones. Recently, with the rise in the number of operations other than war (OOTW), new material, tailored to preparing soldiers for missions like Kosovo, is being added to the training syllabus.<sup>6</sup> Instruction in the areas of local customs, language, and negotiation forms the backbone of pre-deployment training. This new training compliments the existing competence found in modern armies. These skills have been developed and employed in a number of situations, including recent peace support missions as well as domestic and international disaster relief operations. But as one analyst observed, "competence is not on the agenda"—capacity is.<sup>7</sup> If one equates capacity with flexibility, just how flexible are the CF's human and material resources?

The ground forces deployed into complex emergencies such as Kosovo are configured in a way which allows them to employ force if required. Having said that, they have the capacity to do a great deal more. This capacity is due to the resources they bring with them, the flexibility of the equipment and personnel, and their ability to react on short notice. Modern military forces are well-equipped with engineering equipment, logistics vehicles, forklifts, cranes, palletised loading systems,

communication systems, food preparation equipment, medical supplies, field shelters, and more. Again, while this equipment exists primarily to support traditional tasks, it can also be used to help build peace. It makes no sense to have military trucks sitting idle when there are shelters or food to be delivered. But employing equipment in this fashion must be done prudently. Equipment should not be permanently committed to projects which would deprive soldiers of the ability to carry out tasks that only they can perform. As seen in Mitrovica, 'post-conflict' situations do not always remain non-violent. Military resources may need to be used in the execution of more traditional military tasks at a moment's notice. Yet this potential need does not preclude their use in peacebuilding. It simply means that plans must be developed to allow for their integration, and for their absence. Each request for the use of military resources must be carefully evaluated against competing requirements.

When the issue of competence was examined above, it was suggested that military personnel are generally resourceful people. Equipment is also inherently adaptable. These two qualities mean that military forces are extremely flexible; capacity built for one purpose can be 're-rolled' quickly for other purposes. Trucks or medical personnel can be involved in a community health program in the morning and immediately dispatched to a riot or public disturbance to see to the needs of military personnel in the afternoon. A graphic example took place in Kosovo quite recently. The bearded Canadian soldiers featured in the *National Post* providing security during the riots in Mitrovica are from a Pioneer (infantry field engineer) Platoon. These same soldiers only days before were building bridges and repairing homes, passing on advice and expertise to local people. That platoon had the flexibility to transition from one activity to another — at opposite ends of the conflict spectrum — on short notice and with relatively little difficulty.

#### Improvements: How to Coordinate Efforts

A key lesson learned from the military involvement in Kosovo was the extent to which the means of re-

sponding to an international crisis are interlinked.<sup>8</sup> This recent experience seems to echo what some in Canada's military have suspected all along. In the 1995 publication, "Peacekeeping Operations," the CF states, "recent missions have clearly demonstrated the requirement to establish a sound working relationship and...a necessity to synchronise the multitude of activities being conducted by the various players."<sup>9</sup> However both this inclination and its eventual realisation in Kosovo have not been manifest in operating procedure. Very little coordination has occurred between the Department of National Defence and any other 'player'. In the cases where liaison between departments has taken place, the coordination of peacebuilding efforts has not received high priority.<sup>10</sup>

Since the number of players in a mission such as Kosovo is extremely large, and encompasses several government departments (not to mention NGOs that operate along national lines), true national coordination would prove to be a daunting task. However, it is vital that this kind of forethought go into complex missions not only to take advantage of each unique competency offered by the partners, but also to avoid redundancy and improve efficiency. By way of example, over 90 Canadian police officers are deployed within Kosovo. They operate at a variety of levels, from members of the United Nations police staff, to individual constables at the regional detachments. There is no centralised support system for these officers and no clear administrative point of contact. Often, these police officers would send and receive mail, obtain supplies, or just drop in to eat and pass and receive information at the local Canadian military camp. This *ad hoc* arrangement, while certainly not a burden on the system, was inefficient, as many officers remained outside the scope of local arrangements. On several occasions, police officers would travel well out of their way, cap in hand, to request services or assistance. These arrangements should have been formalised well before deployment into the theatre of operations. Other examples include the sharing of intelligence (both military and diplomatic) as well as receipt of political advice. Quite often, favours and personal relationships were the

only basis upon which national efforts were coordinated.

Related to this is the notion that the effect of the vast number and variety of individual national contributions can be diluted if the resources are not concentrated. The so-called 'framework nations', including Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and the United States, were able to exercise effective control within their respective sectors owing to the concentration of their resources. Canada, on the other hand, regarded this approach as self-serving, and chose to deploy its resources to wherever they were needed or requested. An alternative strategy would be to deploy contributions in such a way as to reinforce each one's capability, thereby providing a more visible (and politically significant!) contribution. This in turn might allow countries such as Canada to wield more influence over how the overall mission should be carried out. For example, the British sector was not only home to British military forces, but also home to most of the British police committed to the province, as well as British aid organisations. Canadian personnel were not so concentrated. There were no Canadian police stationed within the Canadian Area of Responsibility and the Canadian NGO effort was similarly scattered. Canadian forensic scientists were dispatched to the British sector, and relied on the British to supply them with basic needs such as cleaning supplies and rubber gloves, while Corrections Canada personnel were not even known to be in theatre until one senior official's unfortunate death. While this may allow for a truly altruistic, 'no-strings-attached' deployment, it reduces cooperation between Canadian agencies and diminishes the voice that Canadians may use in influencing the direction of the mission. The concentration of Canada's military resources in Bosnia - resulting in a critical mass of troops sufficient to allow Canada to assume command of an entire sector - indicates that this lesson is being taken to heart.

#### Recommendations

From the examination of the mission in Kosovo several policy recommendations may be offered.



❖ Participation must come from across the spectrum of government and non-governmental agencies. This broad response should not be limited to traditional areas, but rather take into account what the complex emergency situation requires and what Canada can offer. For example, although power generation facilities in Kosovo were in desperate need of repair, a repair strategy was not implemented in a timely fashion. Perhaps an experienced representative from the Canadian government, or even from Canadian private industry, could have done a better job.

❖ While the role of the military is extremely flexible there are two points to be borne in mind. The first is that one "cannot let military action replace proper long-term development or specialised civilian peacebuilding."<sup>11</sup> The second is that while the military may be able to do a great deal of work that can be done by others, it is the only organisation that can provide the kind of security that is often a prerequisite to further peacebuilding activities. Unless a safe and stable environment is established, no other efforts will be possible.

❖ In order to allow for the best possible use of national resources - so that inefficiency may be reduced and accomplishments be proportional to efforts - Canadian activity must be concentrated and coordinated. This is only possible through the establishment of a steering committee - perhaps at the deputy ministerial level - that treats responses to crises such as Kosovo as truly national responses. Cooperation between departments must be formalised and practised before emergencies arise. Liaison officers should be exchanged and exercises held to rehearse responses and inter-agency decision-making. These exercises will serve to build understanding and trust between depart-

ments. Policy advisors should be provided to military commanders in the field not only at the force and contingent levels, but perhaps as low as the unit level if the situation so warrants. This practice will help ensure the coordination of national action.<sup>12</sup> The United States has recently been forced into this kind of inter-agency cooperation by Presidential Decision Directive 56 that mandates coordinated action.

### Conclusion

Canada must provide a credible, appropriate, and creative response to issues that it believes to be worthy of action. Penny-packetting our scarce foreign and defence policy resources makes little sense in an age where budgets are shrinking but the frequency of interventions is rising. The Canadian Forces provide an immediate, competent, and capable means to help build peace in post-conflict scenarios. It is able to respond in accordance with the principles of human security. Precisely how it is employed must be the subject of on-going, informed debate.

### Notes

1. Bradd C. Hayes and Jeffrey I. Sands, "Non-traditional Military Responses to End Wars: Considerations for Policy-makers," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 26, no. 3, 821.
2. The United Kingdom's 'Ethical Foreign Policy' championed by Robin Cook is a case in point. For a critique of the United States' adoption of a similar perspective, the so-called 'Clinton Doctrine' see Michael Mandelbaum, "A Perfect Failure: NATO's War Against Yugoslavia," *Foreign Affairs* (Sep/Oct 99): 2-8. The international version of this type of policy is discussed in Javier Solana, "NATO's Success in Kosovo," *Foreign Affairs* (Nov/Dec 99): 114-120.
3. Hayes and Sands, 169.
4. KFOR Mission Website, [www.kforonline.com](http://www.kforonline.com).

5. Ibid.
6. As LGen Romeo D'Allaire commented, "warfighting is proving to be a solid base from which to train up to peace support operations, not the other way around." Comments made at the Canadian Military History Conference, 5 May 2000, Ottawa.
7. Jim Whitman, "Those That Have the Power to Hurt but Would Do None": The Military and Humanitarianism," *The Journal of Humanitarian Assistance* (June 1997): 1.
8. Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, Secretary of State for Defence, "Kosovo: An Account of the Crisis." [www.mod.uk/news/kosovo/account/crisis.htm](http://www.mod.uk/news/kosovo/account/crisis.htm).
9. B-GL-301-003/FP-001, *Peacekeeping Operations*, p. 3-6-1.
10. One Lieutenant Colonel position is seconded from DND to DFAIT, but concentrates on the commitment of troops to peacekeeping tasks and giving advice in this important area. Several officers have been loaned to CIDA in recent years, but have largely dealt with logistical issues in the delivery of aid and assistance.
11. Whitman, 4.
12. See David A. Lange, "The Role of the Political Advisor in Peacekeeping Operations," *Parameters* (Spring 1999): 92-109.



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